

SENATE RESOLUTION
8713

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Eide, Kauffman, Fairley, Prentice, Fraser, Rasmussen, Zarelli, Parlette, Schoesler, Brandland, Hewitt, Swecker, King, and Spanel

WHEREAS, January 11th has been designated a National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness by the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, In 1948, President Harry Truman signed a bill into law, declaring February 1st, National Freedom Day, and the day was chosen because it was on that day in 1865 when President Abraham Lincoln signed the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, outlawing slavery; and

WHEREAS, Washington state has been in the forefront, nationally, in the fight against human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, The widespread media coverage of the murders of two Washington mail-order brides, Susanna Blackwell from the Philippines and Anastasia King from Kyrgyzstan, by their husbands, and the forced servitude of Helen Clemente, also from the Philippines, brought to the public's attention one facet of the much larger and more insidious phenomenon of human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, A conference on human trafficking was held at the University of Washington in 2001, spearheaded by then-state representative Velma Veloria, University of Washington Center for Research on Women Executive Director Sutapa Basu, and various organizations in the Asia-Pacific Islanders community; and

WHEREAS, Organizations like the Tronie Foundation, founded by Trong and Rani Hong, themselves victims of human trafficking, operate in Washington state to give a voice and support to victims of human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, former state Senator and Congresswoman, Linda Smith, established Shared Hope International, a nonprofit organization with the mission of rescuing and restoring victims of sex trafficking; and

WHEREAS, Through legislation introduced by former state representative Velma Veloria and former senator Jeralita Costa, the Washington state task force against the trafficking of persons was created in 2002, the first of its kind in the nation; and

WHEREAS, That same year, Washington was the first state in the nation to pass the mail-order bride act, which requires international matchmaking agencies to provide, upon request, criminal and marital background information on Washington state residents using the agency to meet prospective brides in other countries; and

WHEREAS, In 2003, Washington became the first state to criminalize trafficking and to extend protections to mail-order brides; and

WHEREAS, In 2005, Washington again led all other states in establishing protocols for providing services to victims of trafficking, and in providing funds for legal aid to undocumented aliens who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, or human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, Washington became only the second state in the nation after Hawaii to place restrictions on sex tourism, and it provided funding for the Washington State Task Force Against the Trafficking of Persons to resume its work for two more years to develop recommendations leading to the creation of a Comprehensive Response to Human Trafficking; and

WHEREAS, Victims of human trafficking need support in order to escape and recover from the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma associated with their victimization; and

WHEREAS, Human traffickers use many physical and psychological techniques to control their victims, including the use of violence or threats of violence against the victim or the victim's family, isolation from the public, isolation from the victim's family and religious or ethnic communities, language and cultural barriers, shame, control of the victim's possessions, confiscation of passports and other identification documents, and threats of arrest, deportation, or imprisonment if the victim attempts to reach out for assistance or leave; and

WHEREAS, The United States was founded on principles of protecting individual freedom; there is a national and state imperative to eliminate human trafficking, including early or forced marriage, commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, labor obtained through debt bondage, involuntary servitude, slavery, and slavery by descent;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize those people and organizations, including Trong and Rani Hong, the Tronie Foundation, former senator Linda Smith and Shared Hope International, former state representative Velma Veloria, former state senator Jeralita Costa, the Washington state task force against the trafficking of persons, and the community organizations and nongovernmental organizations that fight daily against the scourge of human trafficking, and encourage others to observe the National Day of Human Trafficking Awareness with appropriate ceremonies and activities to combat human trafficking; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the department of community, trade, and economic development office of crime victims advocacy, to former state representative Velma Veloria, to former state senator Jeralita Costa, to Dr. Sutapa Basu, Executive Director of the University of Washington Center for Research on Women, to the Washington state task force against the trafficking of persons, to Trong and Rani Hong and the Tronie Foundation, and to former state senator and congresswoman Linda Smith and Shared Hope International.

I, Thomas Hoemann, Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8713,
adopted by the Senate
January 31, 2008

THOMAS HOEMANN
Secretary of the Senate